

OTHER NATIONS

Sweden's Americanization

"The Changing Swedish Electorate: Class Voting, Contextual Effects, and Voter Volatility" by John D. Stephens, in *Comparative Political Studies* (July 1981), 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

In 1976, after 44 years in power, Sweden's Social Democratic Party (SDP) lost to a Central Party coalition—a loss that was narrowly repeated in 1979. Some scholars suggest that growing affluence has made conservatives of Sweden's blue-collar class, the traditional mainstay of the SDP. It is true that the working class no longer votes in a block as it once did, says Stephens, a Brown political scientist; but, more significantly, neither do white-collar workers. He anticipates an "Americanization" of Swedish politics.

Since World War II, working-class Swedes have enjoyed educational opportunities, rising incomes, and an increase in social mobility that have begun to blur old class distinctions. But the biggest change in Swedish society has been the growth of trade union membership in the white-collar professions. TCO, the white-collar union, now represents 25 percent of Sweden's labor force. Where once white-collar individuals voted their social status (i.e., anti-socialist), they now vote their economic self-interest—as employees. The problem for the Social Democrats is that "voting left" no longer necessarily means voting SDP.

As labor organizations have grown, Sweden's middle parties have made adjustments. SDP policies, ironically, have helped. The socialists stressed rapid industrialization and economic growth. Some of the results—the dehumanization of the work place, unplanned regional change, and, especially, an ambitious nuclear program—created allies on the Left (such as the ecology movement) for the Central Party.

Leftism is increasing in Sweden, says Stephens, but party voting is declining. Votes are becoming less predictable, and many Swedes seem to be making their political choices near the end of campaigns. Frequent changes of government are likely to be the result, particularly under a new constitution that mandates short (three-year) terms in office. Elected officials, Stevens concludes, will be tempted to watch opinion polls instead of trying to pass coherent national programs, and to depend increasingly on "American style" media blitzes and personality politics.

Moscow's Errant 'Satellite'

"Communism and Ethiopia" by Paul B. Henze, in *Problems of Communism* (May-June 1981), Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Widely displayed Soviet flags and portraits of Marx and Lenin suggest that Ethiopia (1980 population: 31 million) is rapidly turning into a full-fledged Soviet satellite. But Henze, a former U.S. diplomat in Addis Ababa, argues that, in reality, the interests of military ruler Mengistu